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Bemba village—Nkula, 1930.
(Ethnographer's tent on left.)

[frontispiece]

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particular villages and timed their different activities (cf. Appendix, Table E).

The conditions of work in this area were particularly favourable from some points of view. The Bemba live in communities of thirty to fifty huts. These are not surrounded by any kind of enclosure and most of the cooking, eating, dancing, quarrelling, and children's play take place out of doors. Hence by placing my tent in the middle of a village, I could watch the people's activities going on around me. I never slept in a native hut but think I observed as much or more from my point of vantage. Kinship patterns and the interplay of individual character—factors that also influence economic co-operation and food distribution—stood out clearly in settlements of this size. I reckoned to spend three to six weeks in each village. The type of chieftainship—the dominant institution in this culture—necessitated my travelling rather extensively from district to district in order to complete a study of ritual and political forms. These visits to different villages from one end of the country to another were valuable from an agricultural point of view since they showed me the range of local variation in cultivation and gave me comparative material on the social and economic changes introduced into Bemba villages by European contacts of different types.[1] But a nutrition expert making a quantitative study of diet would probably have collected more valuable material by staying in one village throughout the whole year.

I worked throughout in the native language as this was essential in this particular area. I therefore had to give up a month entirely to linguistic work on my arrival, and spent at least three before I was able to question informants with any success.[2] The actual

[1] Cf. my 'Anthropological Problems in North-Eastern Rhodesia', *Africa*, 1932, vol. v, and 'The Village Census in the Study of Contact Problems', ibid., 1935, vol. viii.

Longer visits were made to villages selected from four different administrative districts, i.e. visits of one to two months in the following: Chiefs' villages—Citimukulu, Mwamba, Nkula, Candamukulu, Matipa on Cilubi Island; and commoners' villages, *Chinsali district*—Pambalasa, Kachienja, Kasaka, Kasakatula; *Mpika district*—Shilusuko; *Kasama district*—Kungu, Mubanga, Kampamba. Visits of one week to three weeks: Chiefs' villages—Makassa, Nkolemfumu, Mwaba, Lucembe, Shimwalule, and commoner's villages, *Mpika district*—Kapongolo; *Kasama district*—Cimba, Citikafula, Molema.

[2] Some grammars and vocabularies exist. W. Lammond, *A Short Grammar of Chibemba*, 1926; *Bemba–English Vocabulary*, 1926; E. B. H. Goodall, *Some Wemba Words*, 1921; P. Guillermé, *Dictionnaire Français–Chibemba*, 1920.

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laborious and the product bitter to the taste. European salt is much better liked, but it is hard to get except in districts near white stores. In distant parts of the country both European and Mpika salt are used for barter, and the traveller will notice as he gets farther and farther away from civilization that the purchasing power of salt goes up and that of money goes down. The white man's carriers are given salt in part payment for their work so that they may buy their provisions with it, and women prefer it to any other form of payment for small services. I have often found that children would rather be given a little European salt than a sweet, and they eat it neat. At Katenda's village during a period of shortage (March 1933) some children, who had been living for some weeks chiefly on gourds, picked up grains of salt from the floor of my tent with moistened fingers. Their avid faces were striking.

The craving for salt is so strong that the word itself (*umucele*) has come to have figurative meanings. In proverbs and folk-tales the husband goes to fetch salt from distant places, and this represents the fulfilment of his duties as a husband. In the girls' initiation ceremony the woman who dresses up as a mock bridegroom at one stage of the ritual, carries an imitation lump of salt over her shoulder, and small pieces are included among the sacred objects (*mbusa*) presented to the girl during the rite. In the ceremonial of founding a chief's new village, salt, together with flour and meat, are buried in the foundations of the ruler's hut. Nowadays, too, the word *umucele* is sometimes used as a generic term for European goods as being the most highly valued of these. Two old women who came to live near Kasama because of the shopping facilities there, described their motive as, 'We came to lick a little of the white man's salt'.[1]

(*c*) *Meat.* The natives' longing for meat is also almost a craving. Meat and fish are considered the *umunani par excellence* and a special word *ubukashya* is used to describe the hunger for meat as distinct from other foods. The supply of game has probably always been inadequate in this area, but the situation is considerably worse to-day. I have noticed that natives returning from the copper field, however sceptical they may be of the other advantages of civilization, are all unanimous that 'It is fine to get so much meat.' In his own country it is no exaggeration to

[1] *Twaisako kumyanga tumucele.*

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If a man's crops are destroyed by

some sudden calamity, or if he has planted insufficient for his needs, relatives in his own village may be able to help him by giving him baskets of grain or offering him a share in their meals. But if the whole community has been visited by the same affliction, such as a locust swarm or a raider elephant, the householder will move himself and his family to live with other kinsmen in an area where food is less scarce. The lack of permanence of Bemba dwellings and the ample supply of land makes such temporary shifts easy. In fact, with this particular economic system, it is simpler for the needy individuals to move to a district of plenty than for the food itself to be transferred to them. Hospitality of this sort is commonly practised in the hunger season, when families go all over the country 'looking for porridge' (*ukufwayo bwali*), or 'running from hunger' (*ukubutuka nsala*)—the rather dramatic Bemba phrase used to describe the custom of paying long visits to better-off relatives. Hence the legal obligations of kinship result in a particular type of food distribution, both within the village and the surrounding neighbourhood, which is not found in those modern native communities in which a more individual domestic economy is practised.

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It must be remembered also, that food and beer are constantly used to fulfil all sorts of social obligations, to reward labour, or to honour men of position. Large quantities of victuals are actually distributed in this manner, and on this use of foodstuffs the political and economic life of the tribe depends. A study of Bemba catering must, therefore, include the division of the commoner's or the chief's supplies with these particular ends in view.

To conclude, we are dealing with a system of domestic economy in which the year's supplies of each householder are distributed between a group of relatives, either within the village or in neighbouring communities, who share the contents of a granary or an eating-pot, and a type of local and political association largely dependent on the provision of meals and beer. The amount of food available for each family, the regularity of the provision from day to day or season to season, and the variations from area to area are largely determined by these purely sociological factors.

The Bemba Village.

To describe the structure of a typical Bemba village is at first sight a difficult task, since one of its chief characteristics is its

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lack of permanence. The village buildings are moved, as we have seen, every few years, even though the new huts are usually built within a ten-mile radius, at the most, from the old. But it is not only the site of the settlement that is changed. The community itself alters both in size and composition. It consists in the first instance of a headman who has won permission from the chief to build a village by proving that a party of his near relatives is ready to live with him and to accept his authority.[1] Since polygamy is the exception rather than the rule among commoners, he cannot hope to find a sufficient following among his wives and their children as can the Southern Bantu patriarchs, but he must rely on the strength of a number of other kinship ties which are described in detail below. If he is successful, the village will grow. He and the elder men of the community will attract more and more of their relatives to live with them, while their own children are in the meantime growing up. Thus the composition of the village becomes more varied as the years go by. On the death of the headman, he is succeeded by his heir, his brother, his maternal nephew, or maternal grandson, and the latter in his turn may attract his own near relatives to join the village. The headman's title is passed on in succession just as long as a sufficient body of relatives are willing to acknowledge the new heir. Thus, of the 160 villages in Citimukulu's territory in 1933, 63 had been in existence during the headmanship of three holders of the title, 16 during two, 25 during one, and 46 were new villages just built. In 19 cases, old and new had been amalgamated.

On the other hand, the original headman may have been unsuccessful in holding his village together, and its component households will then have split off, so that the village gradually dwindles in size until it finally breaks up and disappears. This is the inevitable end of all Bemba villages, except in the case of the chief's or the hereditary councillors (*bakabilo*), whose ancestors have ruled over villages in the same locality for twenty or more generations apparently. The changes in the size and membership of a village may coincide with the death of the headman or the appointment of his sucessor but more often with the removal of the village to a new site.[2] The characteristic kinship and political system of the Bemba occasions such changes, and the practice of shifting

[1] The personal favour of the chief is also necessary.
[2] Cf. the example given on pp. 156–7.

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cultivation provides the opportunity. One fact, however, remains clear. Whatever the changes in its composition, the village remains first and foremost a kinship unit, of which the majority of the inhabitants are directly connected with the headman himself. Even in the communities built in the Kasama area, where natives chiefly assemble for the purpose of looking for white employment, it is still considered unusual to join a community unless some kind of relationship with the headman or some other influential member of the village can be established,[1] although of course, in this case the kinship groups are breaking into smaller and smaller units and the structure of the community is much less closely knit.

The principles of local association among the Bemba are two in number—the rule of primary matrilocal marriage and that of matrilineal descent. The first is the predominant factor in fixing residence, and the nucleus of a Bemba village is a matrilocal extended family composed of the headman, his married daughters, their husbands, and the latter's children. But each man is legally identified with his mother's lineage group and belongs to her clan. He is heir to his maternal grandfather, or maternal uncle, and may therefore leave his wife's village to succeed to an office among his mother's people. In any case, he has the right to remove his family to his matrilineal lineage group after some years of married life. He is the legal guardian of his sister and her children, subject to the rights of his sister's husband,[2] and hence may have to support her if her husband dies or deserts her. If his rank is high, or he has achieved a headmanship, he will find that male and female members of his lineage group will want to come and live with him, wherever they may have contracted a marriage. So that there are many occasions when the matrilocal family grouping breaks down and residence

[1] One of the few regular prostitutes in the Kasama area, who wanted to build herself a hut in a village near the town to follow her profession there, felt it necessary to trace a relationship to the headman in order to establish her right to do so. The kinship was fictitious, but, as the natives said in explanation, 'She kept giving the headman presents and saying she was his sister's daughter until he said: "All right. Build a hut over there."' It was interesting that even an emancipated woman of this type apparently considered it essential to claim and occupy a recognized position in the local kinship group.

[2] There is a very even balance between the powers of the father and the maternal uncle nowadays—cf. my *Mother-right among the Central Bantu*. Essays presented to C. G. Seligman, 1934.

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is determined by matrilineal descent, or even in some cases by patrilineal ties, as we shall see. So that we have to deal with a primary principle of local association—matrilocal marriage and a number of secondary ones.

The Primary Group—the Matrilocal Extended Family.[1]

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By the rule of matrilocal marriage a man goes to live at his wife's village and works there for his father-in-law for a number of years. Thus, the aim of each man is to have as many daughters as possible since their marriage makes him head of a strong economic unit composed of his daughters, his sons-in-law, and their children. The more daughters a Bemba has the more fortunate he is considered to be. His sons leave him to go and live in their father-in-law's villages and become economically dependent on their wives' families. They move from home at betrothal (i.e. about 12 to 14 years) and remain in the village into which they have married until two or three children have been born. Even if they remove their families home later in married life it is more likely that they will go to their maternal grandfather or maternal uncle, than to their father. But a man's daughters, when they marry, build huts near his own, and if their husbands settle down happily in their wives' community, they remain there more or less permanently and form the backbone of their father-in-law's village, if he is a headman. Hence the Bemba proverb, 'A man is a granary on the veranda (i.e. a man acknowledging economic obligations but living far off) and a daughter is a granary by the door-way (i.e. a source of economic support near at hand).'[2]

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Besides the advantage of the presence of his sons-in-law, a Bemba father looks forward to the arrival of grandchildren. With these he is on very intimate terms. As children they sleep in his hut and he and the grandmother play an important part in their education. In early married life the granddaughters will probably remain in his village if their parents are still resident there, and grandchildren of both sexes are welcome to return there later in life whenever they please. The children of a man's daughters are considered a very special asset, whereas the children of his sons, though treated with equal affection, usually live elsewhere. To

[1] Matrilocal marriage is still practised but its duration is gradually decreasing.
[2] *Mwaume butala pa lukungu: mwanakashi butala pa muinshi.*

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have sons, he says is 'to throw away the seed' (*ukupose mbuto*), but to have daughters is to 'set up a local group' (*ukusange cifulo*).

In a new village there will probably be one matrilocal family group of the type described, i.e. a headman and his married daughters and their husbands and possibly one or two married granddaughters. But when the community has been in existence for a long time, or the headmanship has passed to one or two men in succession, there may be three or four of these matrilocal extended families composed of the daughters of contemporaries of the headman, either men who originally came from another village to marry one of his near relatives and have chosen to live with him all their married lives,[1] or contemporaries of the last headman who have preferred to remain living with his heir. These heads of matrilocal family groups are the most influential members of the community and are known as the 'great ones' of the village (*bakalamba*), and the household of a man who has several married daughters living under his care is known as a 'big house' (*iŋanda ikalamba*). Of the headman of one village who had seven married daughters and their husbands and children—some of the latter also married—living with him, natives exclaimed with rapture: 'Truly that is a big house! My word! That is luck indeed!'[2]

Thus, the chief principle of local association in Bemba society is a man's legal right to the services of his son-in-law. The rule of residence results directly from the type of marriage contract. Among a number of other Bantu peoples, the transfer of material goods, such as cattle, is the essential element of the marriage transaction, and determines the relationship between the groups so united throughout the married life of the couple concerned. But among the Bemba, the marriage payment is insignificant, or was so until the present day. It consisted of a small betrothal present (*nsalamo*) such as a bracelet, a couple of bark-cloths given by the bridegroom to his father-in-law at the initiation of the girl (*fye cisungu*), and at the time of the marriage ceremony (*mpango*), these latter now being replaced by cloth, or a few

[1] This was apparently quite common in the old days, though rare now. In most villages one or two old men are described as having 'come here to marry' and in one village (Kacienja, near Shiwa Ndandu 1931 and 1934) a man had actually become headman of his wife's village, assuming authority over her relatives, although he was of course unable to officiate at ceremonies to the ancestral spirits of the community, which office he delegated to a member of his wife's lineage group. [2] *Iŋanda ikalamba iena! Mwandi! Te kushyuka!*

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Nkashi = my sister
Mweshikulu = my grandchild
Tatafyala = my son-in-law, father-in-law, maternal niece's husband
Mamafyala = my mother-in-law
Umwipwa = my maternal niece or nephew
Umwana = my son or daughter

Additional Households.

Besides the relatives for whom he has the strongest responsibility, there are a number of other kinsfolk who may join a headman and accept his authority. These are, roughly speaking, of two types: (*a*) destitute persons, chiefly women, who want his support, or (*b*) relatives of either sex who are not necessarily in poor circumstances, but who may be attracted by an elder relative's personal popularity or rank to settle with him. These latter may include young men whose normal male guardian is dead, or middle-aged men who want to settle somewhere temporarily, until their own personal following has become big enough for them to risk setting up a community of their own. These additional households may include in the first category, widows of the headman's *nalume*, whom he is bound to inherit or else support; poor relations of his wife, or women who claim the term of grandmother, mother, sister, cross-cousin, or granddaughter but are only distantly related. The second group may consist of male relatives of the matrilineal descent group—younger brothers, maternal nephews, cross-cousins, or grandsons—who have chosen to return to live with him after their period of matrilocal marriage is at an end, or, if the headman is a man of high position, his own sons—almost invariably the case at the court of a chief where the 'sons of the chief' (*bana bamfumu*) have a regularly established position at the capital, bring their wives to live with them, and rival the maternal nephews, the rightful heirs, for favours. Nowadays, clerks earning good money in European employment are similarly able to attract their sons to settle with them, and the statement *aya kuli wishi* ('he has gone to his father') or even *atemwa kuli wishi* ('he likes his father') may cause some comment, but no surprise at the present day. Thus, the presence of the father-son grouping in a Bemba village occurs, however infrequently, although such an association seems to run directly counter to the rules of legal affiliation. Grandsons either through the daughter or through the son also tend to join a grandfather of rank or position.

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Hence, though the Bemba village is a kinship unit, its composition is by no means rigidly fixed. There are certain main principles of local association, but the practice of temporary matrilocal marriage makes for a good deal of change from one community to another, and the even balance between the powers of the father and those of the maternal uncle allow a man a number of possible allegiances.[1] Admiration for rank, or for wealth under modern conditions, sometimes cut across the principles of kinship, so that men may be found living with more distant rather than nearer relatives. The former have a higher status. Added to all these factors the Bemba are great visitors and from childhood up spend months or even a year or two 'seeing' relatives (*ukumona bantu*) in different parts of the country, and this habit of movement seems definitely part of their social system.[2]

Modern Changes in Village Structure.

In spite of the possible variations in the composition of a Bemba village, it remains a closely knit unit. The pattern of behaviour between the different relatives and the legal obligations that bind them are traditionally fixed. If a man settles down in a community, and builds a hut there, he does so usually as a son-in-law of a man of that village, more rarely as a brother, a maternal nephew, or a maternal grandson, and very occasionally as a son. If a woman leaves her parent's village and joins another community she goes there either as the wife of a man returning to live with his people, or as a deserted or widowed woman taking refuge with the members of her own matrilineal descent group. In either case, the behaviour of each new arrival is fixed, and also their type of economic inter-dependence as will be described in the next chapter. In a modern village there are two marked changes. In the first place these settlements are no longer composed of close relatives of the headman, but consist of a series of small kinship groups —two or three households, a mother and two married daughters,

[1] Compare the much more fixed structure of the village in a matrilineal society where patrilocal marriage is practised, i.e. in Melanesian societies where the boy goes to live with his maternal uncle in adolescence and marries there, or in the composition of the kraal among the strongly patrilocal, patrilineal Bantu societies in South Africa.

[2] Missionaries claim that the building of permanent villages in this area would ease the problem of locating schools. This is true, but it would be unlikely to stop the children of the village being sent to 'see' their grandparents 30–50 miles away for six months at a time.

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a man and his wife and his mother, &c. In these circumstances the unit of economic co-operation is smaller than formerly; the families detach themselves more easily and go to join other villages according to their fancy; and the authority of the headman is lessened, since his kinship with them is slighter than in the old-fashioned village.

A typical kinship unit of the old-fashioned type is described in greater detail in Chap. X. An analysis of the social structure of a number of such communities can be found in Appendix, Table E, for those who have a special interest in kinship problems. The economic system based on these types of local grouping must now be described.

The Village Scene.

The huts in a Bemba village fill a circular or oval space in the middle of a ring of garden-beds. Those on the outskirts are built side by side, anything from 3 to 20 ft. apart, each with its door facing to the centre. The huts in the centre are scattered without much determinate plan.[1] When building a village the older men take the good sites such as small eminences or ant-hills, and their huts tend to be larger and better built. Their sons-in-law either build close to them, or else, if there are sufficient young men to form a group of their own, these construct their huts round the open dancing space (*ulubansa*) at one side of the village. The granaries of house-holders living on the outskirts stand in a ring on the garden-beds, the others are placed near their owners' huts. The men's club-houses (*nsaka*) are nothing more than open shelters, roofs supported on uprights, and these are usually built at each end of the village.

Huts are circular or square in shape,[2] with broad verandas in the case of men of substance. A man and his wife sleep in each hut, but any child over two or three (the weaning age) is sent to sleep with its grandparents, and in an old couple's house it is common to find five or six small children stretched in a row on a mat in front of the fire. Young girls usually sleep in the hut of a young married woman whose husband is temporarily away, or with a widowed woman. They often change their sleeping-

[1] In the larger chiefs' villages the huts are divided into *icitente* (*ifitente*), separate areas under the control of a headman.

[2] The square huts are the more modern variety.

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CHAPTER X

DISTRIBUTION IN A TYPICAL VILLAGE

Character of the Village.

621 TO illustrate the distribution of food in an actual Bemba village I have chosen notes taken at Kasaka near Shiwa Ndandu from 1 September to 7 October 1933. This was a settlement of twenty-nine huts, that is to say about the average size. The community was principally composed of four matrilocal family groups of which the male or female heads were near relatives of the headman. The members of the younger generation were closely knit by a number of cross-cousin marriages. Its structure was probably typical of the older Bemba village in which matrilocal marriage is still universally practised. Moreover, since the observations coincided with the recent copper slump, the proportion of adult men to women was unusually high in the village—i.e. nineteen men to twenty-three women—so that it was possible to see the traditional family units at their joint economic work. Kasaka stood at least 60 miles from the main motor road from Abercorn to Broken Hill and over 400 from the copper belt to the south, so that its direct contact with European civilization was slight, and native life had been little changed. On the other hand, the wage-earning possibilities were higher than in most parts of the country, since Kasaka stood seventeen miles from a European plantation (Shiwa Ndandu) which afforded the younger men opportunities for work, and four out of the nineteen men were regularly employed there during the week, returning home at the week-ends. All but two of the fourteen younger men had visited the mines at least once, and one had been four times, but most of the women had never left their own country, or even this particular part of the territory. In this last respect the village was typical of conditions over most of the plateau. Certain environmental and seasonal difficulties as to the food-supply were of course limited to this particular area and these will be specified.

651 621 The financial position of the villagers can be gauged from the following figures: four out of the twenty adult males were too old to pay tax and therefore needed money only for occasional garments for themselves and their wives. Each had acquired one

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cloth or blanket during the past year,[1] whether through a gift from a son in work at the mines, the payment at a daughter's marriage, or the sale of beer. One had been able to employ two young boys to cut trees for him through the generosity of an absent nephew. For the rest, these older men lived from harvest to harvest without using money at all, and their position is typical of their contemporaries all over the district. The four men employed at Shiwa Dandu were regularly earning 10*s*. a month, while most of the others had worked for two to three months at a time locally to earn their tax and to make small extra sums for clothes and other European goods. Three had used, or were using, paid labour to make their gardens. One, an unusually intelligent cultivator, had paid his tax by the sale of vegetables to Europeans, and three had made a few extra shillings with beer. It is doubtful whether on an average the men of this village handled more than 25*s*. a head during the year, of which 10*s*. went in tax.[2] In a community with fewer opportunities for work locally, this sum would probably be smaller.

As regards its food-supply, the village was in a fairly satisfactory position according to Bemba standards. Its gardens had not been destroyed by locusts, and at the recent harvest the average figure for the contents of its sixteen granaries was 2,804 lb. of millet. At the time of observation, about three months after the reaping and storing of the grain, the supply was still adequate and caused the people no concern. Beer was brewed seven times during thirty-two days and two gourds were brought into the village as presents. These figures show that the millet-supply was quite sufficient, and if the people went short of *ubwali* it was because the women could not or would not cook it, and not because of its scarcity.

The relish situation was quite different, and it soon appeared that the provision of *umunani* was the chief difficulty of the housewife at this particular season of the year. The garden vegetables were over. The mushrooms would not appear for another two months, and though there were stored legumes, &c., to fall back on, there were such small quantities of these available that housewives were afraid to use them frequently for fear they would not last till the end of the season. This left nothing for relish but wild spinaches or *icikanda* orchids—food that had to be hunted

[1] At a cost of about 5*s*.
[2] The tax has since been reduced to 7*s*. 6*d*. per annum.

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for in the bush some way off. The shortage of relish would have been more pronounced in the ordinary course of events than it actually was during my visit, for since the village stood in good game country, my party was able to provide three large buck for distribution among the inhabitants. The meat orgy described on pp. 158–9[3] occurred in this village.

The Composition of the Village.

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Kasaka was a Bemba village built in what was originally a Bisa district. This part of the country[1] had been conquered by the Bemba under a former chief Mwamba shortly before the arrival of the Europeans, and he, according to the usual practice, had left a number of faithful captains and followers to hold the occupied territory for him, the forefathers of the present Kasaka being amongst them. The latter still spoke of himself as almost a stranger in a foreign land, and traced his origin from a district in the heart of the Bemba country about six days' journey away. Marriages between the Bemba and their conquered subjects had always been common, however, and a number of the inhabitants of the present village were plainly of Bisa stock,[2] and some even described themselves as Bisa.

The village itself was of fairly long standing as Bemba settlements go. The first Kasaka (Kasaka I on the accompanying chart) had been 'given a village' in 1914 by the then chief Mukuikile. He died in 1924 and was succeeded by the present Kasaka (Kasaka II), his younger brother, then a middle-aged man living at Mpika some sixty miles away, in European employment. The heir returned to his brother's village to mourn, to inherit the name, the spirit, and the hereditary bow of the dead man (*ukupyanika*), and finally, one of his widows. He had then to wait to see if his personality and prestige were sufficient to enable him to build up a village of his own. In all Bantu societies it is usual to find a delay of a year or so between the burial of a man and the final settlement of his succession and inheritance, but the Bemba kinship system allows such freedom of choice of residence to a dead man's relatives, that it remains for some time an open question as to whether his successor will be able to hold the remains

[1] The territory of Mukuikile, a sub-chief of Nkula.

[2] Slight differences in the religious and magic rites practised in this area seemed to be the only distinguishing marks.

[3] [Erratum, should be pp. 58–59. - Analyst]

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of the village together or not. To the European it is extraordinary that twenty or thirty families can scatter here and there after a death and continue dispersed in this manner for two or three years, yet remain conscious of their unity and ready to join up again later, with losses and additions, to form a new community. But this is the case in Bemba society in which ties of kinship are eventually stronger than local association, and in the present instance Kasaka II returned to Mpika for a period of two years, taking with him the two most prominent women in the village, his two sisters, the latters' husbands and children. The majority of the other relatives, including the chief widow of Kasaka I, settled down temporarily in neighbouring villages where they had kinsmen.

The community reassembled in 1929, i.e. five years after the last headman's death, and had not moved its site before my visit in the autumn of 1933. Its composition showed clearly those two fundamental principles of local association already described—the matrilocal marriage rule and the strong identification of interest between the brother and the sister. There were four 'big houses' in the village, named for convenience A, B, C, and D on the chart. Kasaka's own family by previous wives had grown up and scattered and he was left living in his old age with NaMarya (A2), the widow of his dead brother, by whom he had two small children (A8 and A9). He was also responsible for four daughters of Kasaka I (A4, 5, 6, and 7), three of whom were married and one unmarried. Kasaka also fed Nakulu Marya (A3), the mother of his wife. This formed one matrilocal group in which the head of the family had succeeded to the care of his brother's widow and children.

The other two chief households in the village were those of Kasaka's two married sisters, NaMukonda (B2) and NaKabanda (C2). Here was a case in which matrilocal residence had persisted throughout the marriage, since these women's husbands, Malalo (B1) and Cabeluka (C1), had come from other villages in youth to marry and had remained in their wives' community all their lives. The groups of households attached to these two big houses have been named B and C respectively. To B belonged three married daughters (B3, 8, 9) and four married sons (B4, 5, 6, 7), and one young boy of 14 (B10). This was an unusual number of sons to remain living in their parents' village.[1] B5, 6, and 7 had all

[1] The opportunity of white employment locally probably accounted for it.

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•621 contracted intra-village marriages (to A5, D11, F2 respectively) and had therefore become attached as sons-in-law to groups A, D, and F, while Japesi, (B4), the eldest son of the family, had been deserted by his cross-cousin (A4) whom he had inherited as a widow, and had returned to live in his parents' village. To C belonged the households of two married daughters (C3 and 7) whose husbands (C4 and 8) had both come from other villages to marry them, and one son (C5) who had married a widow (C6) and had therefore been able to bring her to his village instead of going to live in hers. There was also a younger son of 15 (C9).

The fourth big house, D, was that of NaMulenga (D2), the sister of Cabeluka, the head of C group. This woman had accompanied her brother as a young married girl when he came from Citimukulu's territory, about five days' journey, to visit his mother's people not far from the present site of Kasaka. Here Cabeluka had found a wife, (Kasaka's sister, C2), and had therefore gone to live with Kasaka I, when the latter had been given a village. Cabeluka took his sister NaMulenga and her husband (D1 and D2) with him, showing how the brother-sister tie may result in a woman electing to stay under his care far away from her own country. Cabeluka and NaMulenga had remained together ever since. This grouping is interesting as showing how marriage and kinship ties may result in a man living all his life about 100 miles away from his place of birth and in a different chief's territory. To D belonged two married daughters' households—D3 married to Chambesi (D4), an 'outsider' by whom she had four children, the eldest daughter Mwika (D6) being recently married, making three generations of married couples in the matrilocal group. NaMulenga's younger daughter (D11) had also married her cross-cousin (B6) and had her first baby (D10) during my visit.

Thus the backbone of Kasaka village consisted of four matrilocal family groups (A, B, C, D), of which all except the headman himself had formed part of the original village of Kasaka I, and of which either the male or the female heads were united to each other by the brother-sister tie. In three cases (B, C, D) the husbands had joined their wives' community in youth and had never reverted to patrilocal residence, a practice which would be thought unusual nowadays.

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Besides these four 'big houses' two or three other groups of families had joined Kasaka's community, though they were less closely related to him than the heads of the former. These groups have been named E and F. Nakulu Citembo (E1) was a classificatory sister of the grandfather of both Kasakas (ShiNkamba, cf. Chart A). She had remained behind in the village of Kasaka I and later joined that of Kasaka II with her daughter NaCitembo (E2), whose husband Macici (E3) was anxious to find work at the Shiwa Dandu estate. She was a youngish woman with one small girl and four boys (E6, 7, 8, 9,). Her younger brother, Dicksonee (E4), had married a girl in the same village, Jani (B9), 'because it is good to marry in a village where your older sister lives', while Macici's classificatory brother, ShiMutale Edward (E5), had contracted a similar marriage with NaMutale (B8.) These two young men were therefore sons-in-law attached to the big house B, and economically dependent on it, but they had their own relatives in Group E, who, as we shall see, supported them in time of trouble.

Group F was composed of the households of three sisters (F1, 2, 3). These were the daughters of Mwelua, now dead, but originally a member of Kasaka I's community and distantly related to him, who was sent to hold the country for the Bemba in early days.

NaMwice (F3) had rejoined the village of Kasaka II because her husband, Pensulo (F4), found it convenient to work near by, although he had no relatives of his own in the village. NaMwice had seven children (F5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17), one of them, F5, married to D10. The second sister, NaMulenga (F2), on the death of her first husband, had married one of the sons of group B, Wankie (B7), and being a widow, had to live in her husband's village rather than her own. Her new husband supported her two children (F10 and 11). These two sisters, F2 and F3, were subsequently joined by a recently widowed sister, NaCengo (F1), of whom they said, 'She has not yet found any one else to marry, and so she said, "Alas! Am I to live alone? Let me go and settle with my sister and wait".' She was supported by her two sisters' husbands and worked for them in return.

The process by which a Bemba village is built up around the central households of near kinsmen of the headman, afterwards augmented by other less closely connected relatives, is thus

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621 clearly illustrated by the structure of Kasaka. If a split were to occur in the future it would be likely to affect the more distant members of the family, i.e. Groups E and F, or the middle-aged householders, the fathers of growing families, such as Chambesi (D_4), Nselela (C_4), Mutaka (B_{16}), or Pensulo (E_4), who had come from outside to marry into the village, but who might now consider themselves of sufficient standing to be able to take their children elsewhere if they wished to do so. In fact, Chambesi asked permission to remove his wife and children to a new village set up by one of his relatives during my visit.

The growth and consolidation of a village group by means of intra-village marriages, whether between cross-cousins or not, is also illustrated on the chart. Among the fourteen young couples in Kasaka, there were eight cross-cousin marriages (A_4–B_4; A_5–B_5; B_6–D_{11}; D_{10}–F_5; A_6–F_6; B_8–E_5; B_9–E_4; C_7–C_8;), of which four took place within the village.

The Village Food-supply.

262 The daily food consumption in the village and its preparation and division will now be described and should serve to illustrate, by concrete example, the different methods of food distribution already enumerated.

In any such sketch of an actual community, the individual characters, with all their temperamental and physical peculiarities, and the dramatic incidents of everyday life, seem to stand out in bold relief, while the formal patterns of kinship, which we have just described, fade from view. We are watching a number of people who like or hate to share their food, or to prepare it in common, and not plotting a system of relationships on a kinship chart. But this is, of course, how the scene appears in the context of everyday life. The abstractions of the anthropologist are based on two types of material: viz. statements of natives as to what they believe they do, ought to do, or would like to do, and his own observations of a number of human beings of widely different personalities, reacting to a set of tribal rules in different ways—conforming to them or rebelling against them. A concrete account of the distribution of food in three family groups will not only enable the reader to visualize the whole process, but will give him an idea of the kind of observations upon which these generalizations have been based.

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FIG. 3. Village plan of Kasaka. (Enlargement of centre section appears on p. 177.)

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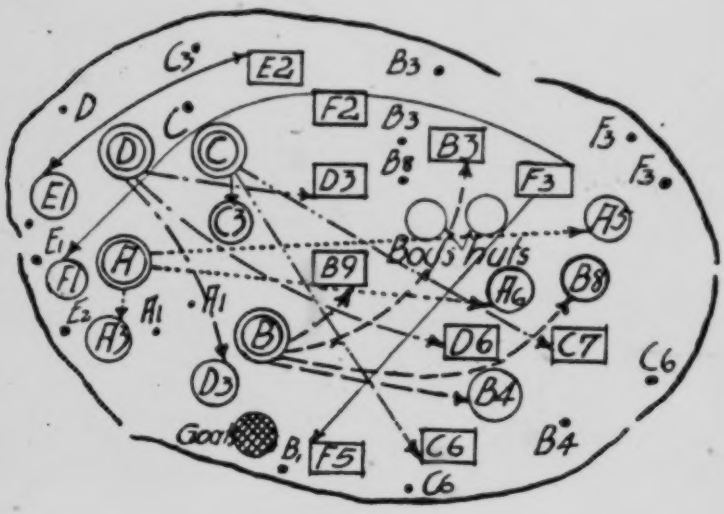
This rather detailed account of the distribution of food in a single Bemba village shows the extent to which sociological factors —the legal obligations of kinship and hospitality and the symbolism of giving and taking food-supplies—actually do affect the amount of food eaten by each individual in a community living as near the subsistence level as a number of African tribes do at the present day.

[62]



KASAKA VILLAGE

September 1934

Huts with verandas

Huts without verandas

Granaries

Goat pen

Enlarged section of plan on page 167 showing huts composing different matrilocal groups.

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of with affection and a sort of pride. 'Come and see our *icibolya*', children used to say to me, sometimes taking me a three-mile walk to see a mere clearing in the bush where the undergrowth was still low, and only faint traces of garden mounds could still be seen. Here they would stand and gaze, sometimes in an almost reverent silence, sometimes trying to reconstruct the past life by suggesting what had happened here and there, and sometimes looking for overgrown fruit-trees. I noticed that carriers going through a new district would always stop at a deserted site, comment on its size, and speculate with eager curiosity as to whom it had belonged.

This attachment to deserted sites is due, I believe, to something more than mere human interest. For the stability of the village group it is important to preserve a sense of continuity between the community which built its huts on one spot and then moved to another. For one thing the name of the village is unchanged unless the whole group splits up, since it is customary to refer to such a settlement by the name of its headman, as for instance *Kwa Kapongolo*, 'at Kapongolo's', and in case of inheritance the heir assumes the dead man's title. Among the various rituals for founding a new village (*ukusokolo mushi*), it is common to find that some symbolic object from the old village—a rafter from the roof of the headman's hut, or a stick from his ancestral shrine—must be carried to the new. The new village must also, in the native phrase, be made 'warm'. It must be turned from uninhabited bush into a human community. It would be dangerous to sleep in a new settlement unless the headman had preceded with his wife (*ukutangila*) and had performed an act of ritual intercourse and lit a new fire 'to warm the village' (*ukukafyo mushi*). Later, divination is carried out by a ritual hunt (*ukusoa libanda*) to find out whether the *imipashi* are favourable. Bemba huts themselves may be built in a day or two, but the founding of a successful village community cannot be achieved by a single act. It requires the slow forging of human ties, and the gradual establishment of common interests and a sense of security among the inhabitants—a process which may take a year or more to complete. The chief Mwamba told me, in explanation of the fact that a year-old village had not yet performed the annual first-fruit rites, *Tabalaikala bwino*, 'They haven't properly settled down yet'; and it is the rule rather than the exception for chiefs to wait to carry out the elaborate ceremonies of

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offering to the ancestral spirits known as *ukupepa* until they have established their rule for a number of years.[1] The term 'shifting cultivator' carries some suggestion of feckless, impulsive conduct. It ill describes the Bemba's anxious consideration of new sites, the ritual precautions they observe for so long when moving their settlements, their efforts to keep perpetual continuity between successive villages, the long probationary period before they are ready to consider themselves established, and their affection for the *icibolya* left behind.

Village Sites of Chiefs.

The *icibolya* of a chief is a place of particular interest. I have been led miles out of my route to look at what was said to be an old village site of one of the Citimukulus, but was now quite indistinguishable from the rest of the bush. Such spots would be shown me with the same kind of reverence and possessive pride with which we might display a ruined castle to a foreign sightseer! Even when the exact geographical position of such sites has been forgotten, their names are often remembered to the present day. Chiefs, as distinct from commoners, give new names to each fresh village they build, and the life of a capital lasts longer than that of the ordinary *umushi*. This name, which is always bestowed by the ruler himself, is supposed to make allusive reference to some decision he has recently taken, or to a topical event. For instance, the late Nkula called the new village he founded in 1934 *Mano yacepa*, 'Common sense is short', because his people refused at first to follow him to a new village site and then hurried after him when they found what good land he had chosen. Even some temporary grass huts the Citimukulu had been living in for the previous two years had a name alluding to the fact that the people had refused to co-operate in building the new *umusumba*. Many such village names survive from the past. Any old man who tells the well-known tale of the migration of the Bemba from Lubaland to their present territory, gives a list of the names of successive villages built by the immigrant chiefs *en route*, while in narratives of more recent years dates are placed with a reasonable degree of accuracy by describing events as having occurred when a particular Citimukulu was still living on such-and-such a site. Some chiefs are nicknamed by the title of a village or its neighbouring river,

[1] Cf. Chap. XVII.

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first to watch the blessing of the traps and the weirs and later to invoke the help of the spirits at the setting of the nets on the big fishing pools (*ifishiba*). On both occasions the priest in charge asks those present if they have any grievance one against the other (*akantu pa mutima*), for the *umupashi* of an injured person might prevent the catching of fish by the rest. He then calls on the name of each of the Land Spirits, strikes the nets to bless them, and says, 'You, our spirits, now we are beginning to work, we people. Give us relish this year that we may eat and be satisfied.' It is important to notice that by the performance of such rites the *icibinda* definitely initiates the fishing season and synchronizes the activities of all the fishermen, and that these ceremonial duties are the basis of important economic privileges, which he maintains in spite of the overlordship of the territorial chief. This balance of interests between the local priest-headman and the chief produces a complicated system of fishing rights.

Permanent weirs are inherited in the matrilineal line and their ownership is often associated with the headmanship of fixed villages. The owner, besides his religious duties, allots trap holes in the weirs to different individuals who set their *miono* there. For instance, in one village the headman had divided the trap holes of a big weir between his sons and brothers, allotting two or three to each. Trap holes may be lent in return for a proportion of the catch, and in some cases a new-comer may obtain the right to build a small mud dike behind the main one giving tribute in return. Setting of nets arranged by casual agreement on the small rivers is strictly prohibited where fishing is valuable, unless the permission of the headman is obtained.

The *icibinda*, besides his right of allotting trap holes and giving permission to set nets, gets a proportion of the catch and also collects tribute for the chief. At one Chambesi village the headman (Molema) got one basket out of every three caught by each individual by the trapping method and two out of every three caught with nets. He sent to the territorial chief (Citimukulu) three baskets a year, two of these on the latter's special demand. In the case of some valuable fishing pools the territorial chiefs have secured special rights and can organize their own fishing expeditions (e.g. at Ca Kandwe, in Nkula's territory).

The sociology of fishing villages. Besides regulating the use of fishing resources this system of rights and ceremonies leaves its

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impression on the structure of the fishing villages. We have seen that the typical Bemba local unit is a loosely organized bilateral kinship group with a constant tendency to split into new communities. Among the fishing villages the value of the economic resources, and particularly the rights of ownership over the *ifishiba*, makes for fixed residence, although a very large village group would make cultivation difficult. New communities therefore divide off, but remain near to and closely attached to the old and under the same leader. Rights of inheritance of fishing weirs strengthen the cohesion of the matrilineal group since succession follows this line, and these Chambesi village communities are matrilineal lineage groups, localized in one district with their male members predominantly of one clan—a more formal kinship structure than usually found elsewhere in Bemba territory.

The headmanship of these villages obviously carries with it pronounced economic advantages. Such appointments are also a matter of great concern to the chief of the territory, who is dependent on the loyalty of these river headmen for his main supply of fish. It thus happens that the Bemba belief in the rule of matrilineal succession to village headmanships, and in the supernatural powers of the head of a local kinship group over the economic resources of a district, is sometimes in conflict with the territorial chief's conception of his own complete overlordship of the whole food supplies of the *icalo*. Under present-day conditions these interests seem equally balanced. The chief's right to appoint headmen in his district has been confirmed under the Native Courts Ordinance, and he does not scruple to use it. I have heard Citimukulu rating the villagers of one of the Chambesi communities, saying, 'You on the Chambesi, you! If you don't bring more tribute I shall chase you away and give the village to some one else.'

A similar attempt of the chief to secure control of valuable fishing resources is seen in the case of the fish-pool known as Ca Kabwe, belonging to the chief Nkula. This pool was originally in charge of two headmen, Sunga Kasawila, and Munwena, but the late Nkula chased them away on account of their 'pride' and installed his own brother in charge, merely keeping the hereditary headmen as *ifibinda* to carry out the necessary fishing rites at the beginning of the season.

But since the local clan group is composed of skilled fishermen who cannot in the last instance be replaced, the history of these

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riverine communities shows that their position is generally secure. The present structure of the Molema group illustrates this fact.

Some Chambesi villages. This group of fishing communities lies on the right bank of the Chambesi near the wooden bridge that used to carry the traffic from Chinsali to Kasama. Here the most important sources of the fish supply are (*a*) the main body of the river itself (*ku milongo*); (*b*) certain backwaters or ponds cut off from the main body of the river (*ifishiba*); (*c*) dikes or weirs built over the wide flats on the river banks. The first headman put in charge of these valuable fisheries was Mulilo, a member of the Lua clan, who was given control of the *ifishiba* at the time of Citimukulu Sampa, i.e. about three generations ago. He was succeeded by his maternal nephew on whose death the then Citimukulu (Ponde) put in a son of his own (the present Mukuikile) to hold the job. The latter failed. He was unpopular. He was an outsider among the Bena Lua. He was not a fisherman and could not perform the annual fishing rites. Temperamentally too he was described as a man who 'did not control his heart sufficiently to found a successful community' (*tatekelo mutima uakwe ua kumone cifulo*). He finally went off to take a job as a cook at Livingstone and the control of the fishing returned to the hands of the Lua clan, and two men in the direct line of matrilineal succession have succeeded to the office of Mulilo. With the growth of this community during four generations three other villages have split off, but have remained under the control of Mulilo. The first village to split off was given to Molema, a brother of the then Mulilo, who was appointed during the reign of Makumba, the first Citimukulu. Two other villages were given to Sampa and Kafoko during the present reign. In this group of four villages three of the headmen (Mulilo, Molema, and Kafoko) are own brothers, while Sampa, though actually their maternal nephew, ranks as their superior since he succeeded to the title of his maternal grandfather and hence became their *nalume*. In this case Mulilo is the senior and gives advice; Molema is the *icibinda* in the sense that he is the luckiest fisher; and Sampa actually utters the prayers during the fishing rites. I know no other case in which four Bemba villages remain united closely together, joining in common economic activities, acknowledging the leadership of one headman, and performing ceremonies to the ancestral spirits together. The value of the fisheries appears to have determined this form of social grouping.

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241 592 sons, one a widower, and one whose wife's relatives lived a long way off (cf. Chap. X). But these groups, composed of two or three men, are becoming rarer, and it is common to find the old men making gardens single-handed for two or three deserted women relatives.

241 592 476 A woman's gardening group is usually composed of herself and her married and unmarried daughters, but as will be clear from Chap. VIII, her other female relatives tend to join up with her, especially under modern conditions. The husband's relatives (his mother or sister) occasionally co-operate also, but this is rare and would only be found in the case of older women of superior social status. A man would have to make his mother or sister her own garden in this case. The custom described as *ukupula* (Chap. IX) naturally provides for many additions, chiefly temporary, to the woman's gardening group.

The extent of co-operation varies, particularly among the men. In the old-fashioned villages you will still see a group of young sons-in-law working under the direct orders of their father-in-law, who is in complete charge of the selection of garden sites and the clearing of the bush. Where the sons-in-law are older, they would still make gardens near each other 'because our wives like reaping together', or in the case of pairs of young men who are close friends, they may like to work alternate days on each other's gardens for company (*ukuteme cima*). They say the work goes quicker so. In fact, a Bemba rarely works alone in a garden till middle or old age, and never likes doing so, nor works very efficiently under these conditions (cf. Chap. XIX).

• 621 (*b*) *The village.* The Bemba village may also be described as an economic unit. Certain tasks are definitely performed in the community. These include net-hunting, in which all the men of the village combine, and fish-poisoning expeditions joined by men and women. Joint work is done in clearing the village paths and in old-fashioned villages once a year on the headman's garden. The village is regarded as a unit for *umulasa* purposes, and its agricultural ceremonies and foundation rites are performed for the whole community.

Added to this, the working parties (*ukutumya*) described in Chap. IX in effect consist of all the able-bodied men or women respectively of the village. Thus the bigger the village the larger the force available for economic co-operation of this kind. The

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present tendency of building smaller and smaller settlements lessens the labour force in this way.

The economic leadership in the village, in so far as it exists, is in the hands of the headman. He directs joint enterprises, decides when the village should be moved, and chooses the new site in co-operation with the other elders. He is in charge of the communal rites, settles minor disputes between the villagers, and represents his people at the chief's court or the District Commissioner's office. He is responsible for the collecting of tribute, providing *umulasa* labour, and for any administrative duties the Government may charge him with, such as the catching of tax defaulters, &c. But there is no doubt that most of the Bemba headman's authority is derived from his position as head of a kinship group, and that he is respected as the grandfather, father-in-law, or maternal uncle of most of the inhabitants, as well as by virtue of his political status (cf. Chap. VII). Thus the power of a headman of an old-fashioned type of community, and in particular those of the *bakabilo*, is in striking contrast to the wavering authority exerted by those ruling over a modern village not definitely composed on kinship lines. For instance, Citikafula, one of Citimukulu's chief *bakabilo*, was headman of a village composed as follows:[1] 25 men, of whom 14 were close personal relatives of the headman (2 brothers, 4 sons, 3 grandsons, 4 maternal nephews, 1 cross-cousin), while the remaining members of the community had come from other villages to marry women at Citikafula's. There were 35 women, of whom 27 were near relatives of the headman (3 wives, 7 daughters, 6 grand-daughters, 6 sisters, 3 maternal nieces, 1 grandmother, and 1 mother-in-law). Hence nearly 75 per cent. of the men and women were members of the headman's own lineage group. In such a village he was able to get large gardens made for him by his younger relatives, strode about the settlement scolding householders with untidy huts, and organized the garden work by constant criticism and encouragement. Whereas Bwembya, a man of equal personality and a member of the royal clan, was headman of a village four miles from Kasama, that is to say, almost within a white township. His community was composed as follows: 52 men, of whom 5 were close relatives only (i.e. father, 1 brother, 1 maternal nephew, 1 brother-in-law, and 1 grandson), and 108 women, of whom 8 were near relatives (1 daughter, 2

[1] Using the kinship terms in their classificatory sense.

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grand-daughters, 2 sisters, 2 maternal nieces, and 1 sister-in-law); 8 per cent. of the inhabitants only were thus closely related to the headman, and 10 men were actually members of quite different tribes.[1] Thirty out of the 52 men had joined the village with the express purpose of finding work with the Europeans at Kasama and not on kinship grounds at all. In a community of this type Bwembya evidently found it impossible to control the activities of his people, and they gave him little economic help in spite of his royal rank. It is often stated that young men lose respect for tribal authorities after working in the mines, and this is largely true, but it must also be borne in mind that the tribal authorities are in charge of groups of quite different composition from those of old days, and they are asked to perform different functions of leadership.

(*c*) *The chief's leadership in economic enterprises.* There are two aspects of the chief's functions as an organizer of labour. In the first place, there are a number of activities he actually initiates and co-ordinates, and in the second, his direction of his own labour force and his accumulation of stores in the capital, sets the pace for agricultural enterprise and forms the basis of the whole economic system of the tribe.

We have seen that the chief actually sets the time for the firing of the gardens, and that the performance of economic rites still to some extent gives the signal for tree-cutting and sowing. The knowledge that big gardens are being made at the capital, acts, as I tried to show, as a stimulus to the undertaking of further work.[2]

Besides, it is difficult to realize, without living at the capital for some time, the extent to which the *mfumu* directs agricultural enterprises by advising or criticizing both the members of his own big village and those of his *icalo*. Ultimately chiefs want food produced in their district, because they then get plenty of tribute. They express this fact quite frankly. A severe shortage also, as I indicated, reflects on their supernatural powers, makes people begin to grumble, and even in time threaten to leave.[3] From all points of view, therefore, it is to the chief's advantage that the people should cultivate efficiently. Their knowledge of cultivating processes, soil selection, and the best moment for planting is also

[1] Note the proportion of men to women in these villages: i.e. 25:35 and 52:108 respectively.

[2] Cf. p. 371.

[3] e.g. the charges made all over the country against Citimukulu during the recent locust epidemic for failure to perform his ritual duties properly.

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TABLE D

Notes on the Structure of the Bemba Village

I. *Table showing the length of life of the Bemba villages of three big chiefs' territories*, 1934.

Citimukulu's territory (Lubemba): 160 villages.
Mwamba's territory (Ituna): 69 villages.
Nkula's territory (Icinga): 76 villages.

	Citimukulu	*Mwamba*	*Nkula*
	%	%	%
New villages (i.e. headmen appointed in reign of present chief)	29	49	42
Villages with 1 previous holder of headmanship	16	26	9
Villages with 2 previous holders of headmanship	10	14	18
Village with 3 previous holders of headmanship	40	10	13
Villages formed by remnants of 2 or more old villages	6	..	15

It will be noted that the proportion of new headmanships created by each chief in his own reign is just under half the total titles in the case of the territorial chiefs, about 30 per cent. in the case of the Paramount chief.

The striking difference between the number of old titles to headmanships in Citimukulu's territory and those of the other two chiefs, i.e. 40 per cent. as against 10 and 13 per cent. respectively, is due to the concentration of the hereditary councillors of the tribe (*bakabilo*) who must inevitably be headmen for social, political, and ritual reasons, in Citimukulu's district.

II. *Table showing the proportion of commoner headmen to those of royal blood*, and hence the political powers of the chief.

	Citimukulu	*Mwamba*	*Nkula*
	%	%	%
Number of commoner headmen	49	42	42
Number of hereditary councillors or priests, acting as headmen	30	6	17
Number of descendants of wives of early chiefs acting as headmen	3	..	..
Number of chief's relatives acting as headmen	19	41	33
Number of headmen from other tribes	..	10	10

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It will be noted that the number of commoners given positions of authority is under half the total number in each territory. The far greater number of chief's relatives holding office in Mwamba's country is due to the number of surviving descendants of the previous Mwamba (Mubanga Cipoya) an extremely powerful ruler, who put his relatives in charge of villages all over the country.

(*a*) In the case of Citimukulu, the chief's relatives consisted of: Brother of the chief, 1; sisters, mothers, or maternal nieces of the chief (*banamfumu*), 7; sons of the chief (*bana ba mfumu*), 10 (9 men and 1 woman); grandchildren of the chief (*beshikulu ba mfumu*), 9 (8 men and 1 woman); relatives in law (*bukwe*), 3 (2 men and 1 woman).

(*b*) In the case of Mwamba, the chief's relatives consisted of: 1 brother, 1 sister; 11 ranked as 'children of the chief', 3 of the present Mwamba, 3 descendants of sons of the past Mwamba, and 5 of the penultimate Mwamba (5 women and 6 men in all); 7 were grandchildren, 4 descendants of other royal lines; and 3 descendants of the wives of former Citimukulus.

(*c*) In the case of Nkula, the chief's relatives consisted of: 1 brother and 2 sisters, 5 'children of the chief', 4 grandchildren (1 woman), and 4 relatives in law, and 9 descendants of other royal lines.

III. *Details showing kinship composition of typical villages.*

(Only adult members of the village are noted. Such terms as brother, sister, grandchild are used to indicate own brother and sister as well as the classificatory extension of these terms.)

(*a*) A village composed of the headman's own *ulupwa* (the bilateral group composed of near relatives of both sides of the family, plus affinal kinsmen).

e.g. *Cikutwe*, a young *mukabilo* of Citimukulu's territory (1934).

Relatives of the present headman, including matrilineal group: 1 mother, 4 mother's brothers and wives, 2 sisters and husbands, 2 maternal nieces (deserted), 2 daughters (one married), and 3 grandchildren (1 male and 2 female) with their spouses.

Others: 2 married brothers temporarily resident; and 2 deserted wives, relatives of the headman's wife.

Relatives of the past headman:

Remains of *matrilineal group*: 1 maternal niece (widowed), 3 grandsons (married), 2 granddaughters (married).

Remains of *matrilocal group*: 2 married daughters and husbands, and 1 son (married) temporarily resident.

(It will be noted that Bemba make a difference between the kinsmen of the present and past headman. Both groups are really kin to the

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present headman, since the title is hereditary, but the first are closer connexions to him than the second, and the distinction is made between those men and women who actually joined the community on his account and those who originally belonged to the past village.)

(*b*) *Two villages composed of the family group of the headman plus that of one or more other bakalamba* (*great ones*), i.e. contemporaries, men who have remained in the village after the death of the previous headman, or those temporarily members of the community, while they are gathering a sufficient following to enable them to build a village of their own.

e.g. *Pambalasa*, near Chinsali (1930).

Relatives of headman:

Matrilocal group: 2 wives, 2 married daughters and husbands, 2 married daughters (husbands away), 2 married grandsons, wife's maternal niece (deserted).

Matrilineal group: 1 mother, 1 married sister and husband, 1 maternal niece (deserted), 1 maternal nephew and wife.

Others: 2 married sons and wives.

Relatives of a mukalamba. ShiNconi, husband of headman's maternal niece (i.e. still living in his wife's village, but in his middle age become head of a group of his own), 1 mother, 2 married sisters, 2 brothers (married to Pambalasa's daughters), 1 brother also married into the village.

Relatives of a mukalamba. ShiMulenga (awaiting permission to form a village of his own) and head of a following, i.e. 2 wives, 1 mother, widowed wife of father, 4 married sisters, 3 married maternal nieces, wife's brother, 3 unmarried maternal nephews. (With this following ShiMulenga formed a village in 1931.)

Kacienga, near Shiwa Dandu (1931 and 1933).

Headman's *matrilocal group* composed of his wife and 7 married daughters and their husbands; the mother and deserted sister of one of his sons-in-law, and a married sister of his wife's.

Two bakalamba, distant connexions of the former headman, each with his own small following composed of 2 married daughters and their husbands.

(*c*) *Village formed on a basis of common purpose.*

Mulenga, near Nkula, 1933. The village of an *ngulu*, i.e. man possessed by a chief's spirit and able to heal people through his knowledge of medicines and powers of clairvoyance. In this instance the kinship structure was hardly apparent, since so many strangers had joined Mulenga in order to get his blessing (many of them barren women hoping to secure children through the blessing of the spirit).

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Fishing in the neighbouring river, Cambesi, was also lucrative. The community was composed as follows:

The headman's relatives: 2 married daughters and husbands, 2 wife's sisters (deserted); 1 maternal niece (married), 1 maternal nephew (married), 1 female cross-cousin (deserted), 1 son (married).

Strangers: 9 married couples some temporarily and some permanently part of the community, and 3 deserted wives.

This made the total male and female relatives of the headman, 12, and the total number of strangers, 21, an unprecedented state of affairs in an ordinary village.

Cf. also the two villages analysed on pp. 385–6.

[p. 416 is blank]

2:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
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KINSHIP CHARTS SHOWING COMPOS

TABLE I *Showing Relationship of Head*

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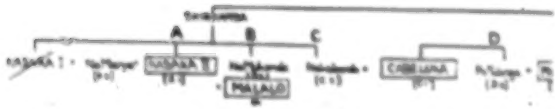
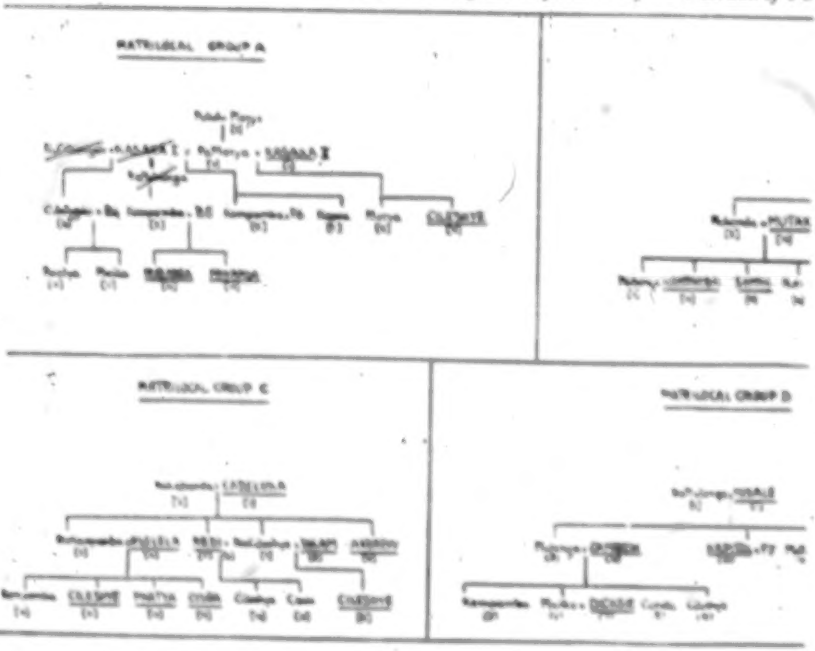


TABLE II *Showing the Dependants of these Heads of Fa*



[p. 424A(2)]

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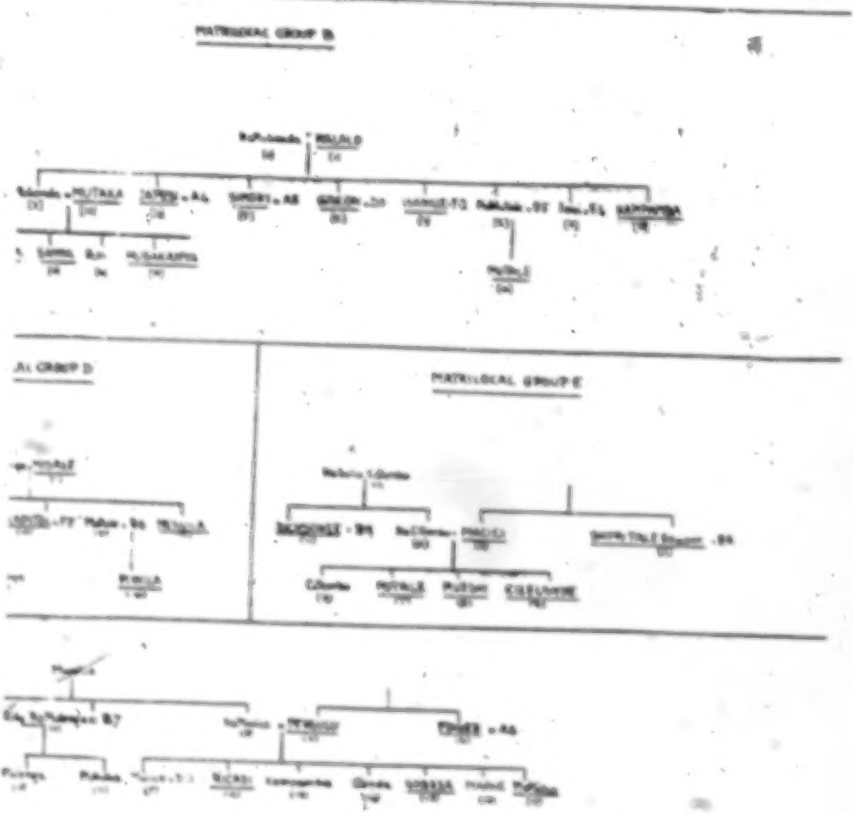
COMPOSITION OF *KASAKA* VILLAGE, 1933

ip of Heads of Families A, B, C, D, E *and* F

Capital letters indicate Men
Small " " Women
Diagonal line indicates Death

vads of Families who make up Five Matrilocal Family Groups



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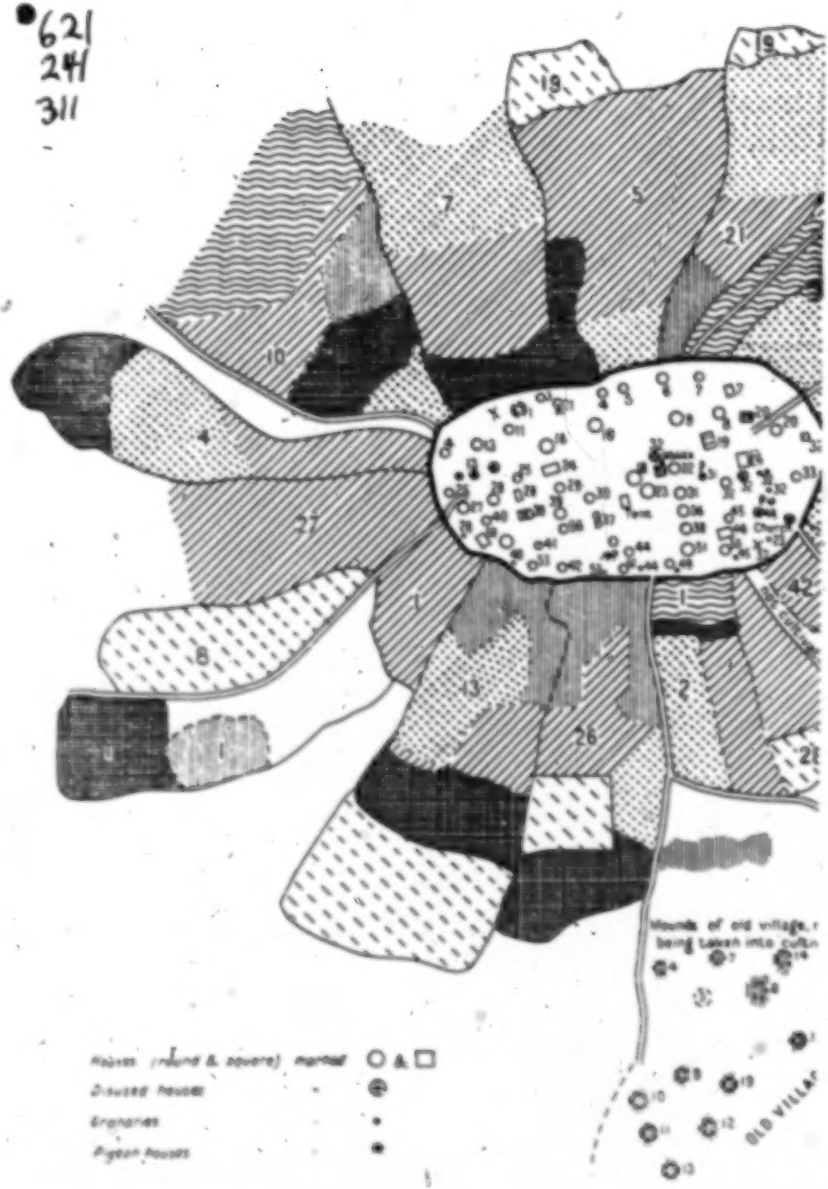

[end map I(a)]

2 Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
FQ5 Bemba FQ5

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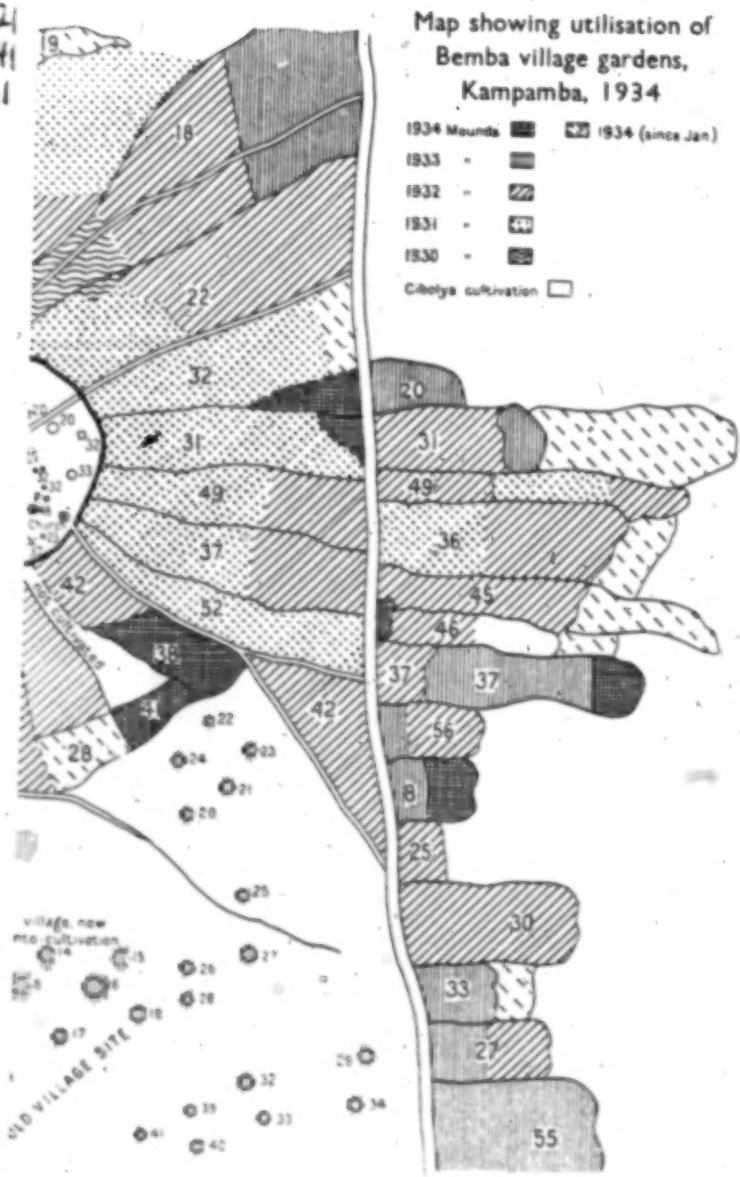

[end map 1 (b)]

3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
FQ5 Bemba FQ5

593 With this system of matrilineal descent the ties between a
604 woman and her brother are very close. The woman produces children who are the heirs of her brothers. The man is the natural guardian of his sisters' children, and he must be consulted about his uterine niece's marriage and could claim the right to marry her where he pleased. He could protect her after her marriage if he wished to do so. The mother's brother could generally claim possession of his sister's children if her marriage broke down. In
[567] the old days he could give one of the children as a slave or a blood-wite to the head of a family to whom he or one of the lineage group owed reparation. He could command the services of his sister's son and bid him follow him to war. The woman in her turn could com-
[789] mand the services of her brother's daughter and was thought to be able to bless or curse the fertility of the latter's marriage. Brother and sister can take each other's property and behave in a free and easy way with each other.

591 Marriage is uxorilocal among the Bemba and among kindred
171 tribes such as the Bisa, Lala, Lamba, Cewa, and Kaonde which
596 also perform a kind of chisungu ceremony. A young man who marries goes to live in his wife's village where he builds himself a hut and becomes a member of her extended family. This is a domestic and economic unit. The sons-in-law work together under
[606] the father-in-law and the daughters with their mother. The man gives service to his father-in-law rather than cattle or other goods as in most other Bantu societies. A young couple has no cooking fire of its own to begin with. The girl cooks with her mother and sends food to her husband at the man's shelter, where he sits with his friends. At first the couple have no granary of their own and no gardens and when they acquire the latter, later in their married life, the gardens are cleared near those of the rest of the extended family group.

596 As a family group of this kind grows in size, its head often
● 621 chooses to separate from the old village and to start a new one of his own. Hence the desire of a Bemba to have many daughters in order to be able 'to found a house'.

591 After the marriage has been established, and children have been born to the union, it remains a question for individual decision whether the husband is given permission to remove his

167 by which a young son-in-law is gradually incorporated into his wife's group
593 is therefore altered. The young wife remains behind with her own people and not with her in-laws and thus, perhaps, is in a happier position than she would be in a patrilineal society; but Read considers that the brides are better looked after among the patrilineal Ngoni, where a woman's in-laws have made a considerable marriage payment for her and conceive it to be their duty to look after her while her husband is away.(1)

AGE SETS AND ASSOCIATIONS

561 Age is not stressed as a principle of social grouping. Precedence is reckoned on the basis of seniority and, as among other peoples, there are special terms for the various stages of life, but there are no boys' initi-
[881] ation ceremonies and no regiments based on age such as are found among the Nilo-Hamitic groups in East Africa. The existence of certain occupational
575 groups, as fishing communities, and of associations, such as those of iron-workers among the Aushi and Chishinga, has already been noted. While there are no secret societies among the Bemba, the Twa in the swamps of Bangweulu were renowned for *Bufwa*, a secret society whose influence at one time extended the length of the Luapula river on both banks as far as Lake Mweru. Among the tribes affected by the cult were the Aushi, Unga, Shila, Tabwa in the group at present under consideration, and also the Lamba and Lunda.(2) It is suggested that in its original form *Bufwa* is now extinct,(3) but it is uncertain whether it still exists in a modified form. Membership was not restricted by age or sex and people were initiated into the mysteries at a festival which lasted several days. The avowed aims of the society were to suppress selfishness and promote social life and its main attractions seem to have been dancing, singing, beer drinks and sexual licence; there was also considerable prestige attached to the ability to converse in the secret language *Lubendo*.

LOCAL AND TERRITORIAL GROUPING

361 The basic residential group is the village - a collection of 30 to 50 huts in the case of a commoner and several times this number in the case of a chief. All these peoples live in villages rather than isolated homesteads, but the size of the villages and their propinquity vary widely from area to area; Bemba villages, for instance, are often 16 to 20 miles apart.

621 The village normally develops as a kinship unit. It can come into
624 existence when a middle-aged or elderly man feels he has a sufficient following of relatives to justify his application to the chief for permission to set up a community of his own. While it is generally built close to relatives, the abundance of land makes it possible to build anywhere within the chief's administrative district. The nucleus is the headman's own matrilocal extended family composed of his young married daughters and their children, together with members of his matrilineage such as his widowed sisters and their sons and daughters. The number of relatives attached to a headman varies with his popularity and efficiency. A man may also succeed to the headmanship of a village by taking the name of his maternal grandfather or maternal uncle by the *kupyonika* system already referred to (see p.15). A

(1) Quoted by Richards, 1940.
(2) Anon. N.A.D.A., 1948. (3) Brelsford, S, 1946, p.14.

621 chief may, however, put one of his own relatives as headman or headwoman
624 over a village, and here the composition of the community will be very mixed containing a group of royal relatives together with those belonging to the original village.

Enquiries in 1934 showed that 29% of the villages in the Paramount Chief's territory were new titles, 16% had had one previous holder of the headmanship, 10% two previous holders, and 40% three previous holders. In the case of Chief Nkula's district, new villages form 42%, those with one previous holder 9%, those with two previous holders 18% and those with thre 13%. The remaining villages in both cases were formed by the amalgamation of two or more old villages.(1)

621 All Bemba villages are, however, liable to change in personnel. Young boys leave to marry and may return again when they have become fathers. Men come from outside to marry girls in the village and may later take them away. The practice of shifting villages every few years provides opportunities for such changes in village composition.

634 The members of a village acknowledge the authority of a chief who rules over a district (*icalo*) which is a geographical unit with a more or less fixed boundary and name. According to Richards these date from the past and represent territories originally allotted to members of the royal clan. It is clear, however, that some further sub-divisions of territory have taken place. Brelsford gives examples of the division of a district by a chief, and its reallocation to his son instead of to his uterine nephew.(2) It is not quite clear how far the political territory, with a fixed name and boundary, exists amongst the smaller tribes in this area.

Each district has its own capital (*musumbo*), where the chief lives, and forms a separate political unit. Its inhabitants pay tribute to the chief of the district and in the old days went to fight for him on request. Law cases are taken to the chief's capital for trial and each territory is a
643 ritual unit in the sense that its chief performs the economic rites of the year for its inhabitants. The Paramount Chief, like the lesser chiefs, has his own territory which he administers, but the word "*icalo*" is also used for the whole of the Bemba country.

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

624 The main political authorities are the headmen, known as the "owners" of villages, the district chiefs and the Paramount Chief. The headman derives his authority from his position as head of a kin group which gives him authority over them and the right of access to the ancestral spirits. He may be said to look after his villagers. As a senior kinsman he is responsible for the maintenance of discipline among the young. He directs communal forms of hunting and fishing. He hears cases informally and initiates the cycle of agricultural activities every year. Since land is not scarce the allocation of land for cultivation is not an important function of the headman, but he acts as arbitrator in any quarrels that may arise over its use. Ritually he offers prayers at a village shrine to his ancestors.

(1) Richards, A. 1939. Appendix D. (2) Brelsford, J. 1944

624 blessing the gardens before firing, the seeds before sowing, and the first fruits of a number of crops. He must organise the payment of tribute and labour to the district chief and pass on chiefly orders and requests. His privileges include the right to personal service from younger relatives and tribute of beer and/or meat. Primarily, however, the position is valued not for economic advantage but for the authority it brings, the command over a small following and the favour of a chief. The sanctions for this authority consist mainly in the headman's popularity, the strength of kinship ties between him and the villagers and their belief that it is dangerous to allow an elder relative to die while cherishing a sense of injury. Ultimately, of course, the headman's power depends on the support of his territorial chief and nowadays of the British Administration.

621 The functions of the different types of Bemba chief differ only in degree from those of the headman. Like a headman, a chief is in charge of his
622 own village, his *musumba*, and he tries to maintain and augment this community by acquiring a reputation for popularity and generosity. A chief's village in the old days was described as having thousands of inhabitants. Big chiefs' villages observed by Richards in 1934 had 400 to 600 huts. They were divided into quarters (*fitenta*) ruled over by loyal supporters of the chief, known as *bafilolo*.

622 Besides administering his own village the chief was responsible for mak-
[692] ing and confirming the appointment of headmen, and presiding over a court composed of advisers mainly drawn from his own village. Witchcraft cases
[681] had to be brought to a chief and only the more important among them could administer the poison ordeal by *mwafi*. The chief could in the old days punish by savage mutilations and by selling a man into slavery. Economically the chief was responsible for initiating agricultural activities by performing the necessary rite at the time of tree-cutting, sowing or harvesting. With the tribute labour at his disposal he made big gardens and built gran-
[721] aries from which he fed his courtiers, messengers and workers. The chief initiated military raids and other forms of warfare, and the great Bemba chiefs maintained their monopoly of Arab guns which they traded for slaves. Bemba country was, in fact, an area of strong centralised government. The chieftains of the Aushi, Unga and other associated tribelets were on a much smaller scale and weaker in political organisation.

[785] But the most important and characteristic activities of the Bemba chiefs are ritual. They are reckoned to have in their own persons power to bless
[763] and curse. They have to be protected from contact with death and to keep sex taboos of various kinds for the welfare of the whole territory. It is probable that the Bemba Paramount Chief in the old days might have been de-
[767] scribed as a "divine king" in Frazer's sense of the word; he was strangled when on the point of death so that his spirit should pass into the land. The Bemba chief derives his ritual power from the fact that he has succeeded to the names of dead chiefs and is thus enabled to call on a long line of ances-
622 tral spirits. Chiefs possess sacred relics - usually stools - which are
778 known as *babenye* and kept in special huts protected by "wives of the dead" or descendants of wives of earlier chiefs. An approach to the ancestral spirits is made at these shrines. Chiefs also sacrifice at the deserted shrines of their predecessors (*mfuba*) and at other spirit centres in the area.

Much of their power depends on the keeping of sex taboos and the

The fifty or so clans represented in the valley are part of a fairly uniform clan system which extends over the territories inhabited by the Bemba-, Luba- and Lamba-speaking peoples. The *Bena Mumbo* (Clay clan) have their *ntulo* at Matando in the upper valley of the Luapula, those of the *Bakosa* (Millipede clan) and the *Bena Mbushi* (Goat clan) are on the Lualaba; that of the *Bena Mfula* (Rain clan) is in the forest of Ngumbo on Lake Bangweulu. Originally, it is vaguely believed, all came from Kola (Angola?)[1] 614

The *cikota* or *cisoko* is a segment of the clan, no longer localised, whose members gather to discuss *milandu* cases and to make decisions in matters of inheritance and succession. 613

Cikolwe ("big cock") is a term used to denote a common ancestor. It can be applied to the head, alive or dead, of a matrilineal descent group of any size, but usually refers to the ancestor or ancestress who broke away from the clan and led his extended family and followers from their clan *ntulo* to the valley.

Clan membership is not rigidly determined; it is usual to belong to one's mother's clan but it is possible to claim membership of any of the clans to which one's grandparents belonged. The descendants of the Lunda of Musata Yamvo remain patrilineal. The Luba from the Lualaba, who joined the Lunda and became Lundaised, were previously matrilineal. 611 614

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION AND SETTLEMENT

Villages were originally founded by the immigrant groups under the leadership of *fikolwe* (sing. *cikolwe*) many of whom were women. The nucleus of each group was formed by a single matrilineal descent group, *cikota*. In spite of inter-marriage and increasing spatial mobility, which tend to obliterate the original connection between the territorial and the kinship structure, villages are still identified by outsiders with their founding clans. 621

Village headmanship remains in the *cikota*. The headman succeeds to the office, the name, the wives, and the insignia (belt and gun or spear) of his predecessor. He has the charge of *nshipa*, the village medicine. A village is divided into wards, *fitente* (sing. *citente*), in which the households of close relatives are grouped together. [624]

Most of the old village sites in the *dambos* of the Luapula tributaries are now derelict. With the coming of the Pax Britannica and the development of cash sales of fish the villages moved closer to the river edge and now extend along the trunk road. New villages recognised by the government must number at least fifteen tax-payers. The average size of villages is 150-200 inhabitants. The capital has a population of 3,000.(1) 361 621

Formerly the huts were circular, grass-roofed, woven bamboo structures,(2) scattered amidst cassava plantations.(3) Nowadays the villages are more 342 361

1) The capital is usually referred to as Kasembe. It was moved south after the Yeke invasion. The old site is part of the territory settled by the Ilemba after they had assisted Kasembe against the Yeke. The new site was previously known as Mwansabombwe.
2) Valdez, II, p.249; Burton, p.46. (3) Livingstone, I, p.248.

342 361 compact, and sun-dried brick is increasingly being used in building. Appendages usually include a raised granary-storehouse, a platform for drying cassava, a kitchen, goat-and-sheep pen and latrine. Fishing camps are of more flimsy construction consisting of wattle-and-daub or grass shelters.

361 621 On the left bank of the Luapula, where the density of the population and its mobility are less, greater concentrations of kinsfolk occur in the villages, which are more isolated and irregularly distributed.

542 945 In polygynous households there is a house for each wife. An open space is left in front of the headman's hut which otherwise does not differ from the others. There are bachelor huts (*itanda*, pl. *amatanda*) for boys but few for girls.

361 722 During the Yeke raids the population was concentrated in some dozen stockaded villages.

361 Village-gardens are occasionally enclosed as a precaution against the bush-pig, especially near Lake Mweru. Each village has its own landing-stage (*caba*).

621 People are now free to build where they wish and the tendency for houses of kinsfolk to be grouped together is disappearing. As the Watch Tower movement developed separate villages were set up by believers who cultivated and harvested in the fields communally.(1)

INITIATION RITES

881 Initiation rites were more elaborate for girls than for boys. Girls still undergo *cisungu*, a *rite de passage*, common to the Bemba-speaking peoples but not found among the Luba, which aims at preparing them for their future life and duties as housewives and mothers. The instruction is imparted by the *Banacimbusa*, matrons and midwives.

[304] There are now no initiation ceremonies for boys. Lunda boys were formerly circumcised at 14-16 years of age(2) in a *mushitu* (thicket) in the Nshinda swamp. No parallel operation was performed on girls.

561 The society is not formally differentiated on the basis of age, and there are no indications of the existence of an age-set organisation.

SECRET SOCIETIES

575 Of the secret societies the *Butwa*(3) was open to both sexes. *Bulindu* is described as a women's society.(4) The *Butwa*, believed to have originated among the Twa of Lake Bangweulu and to have been established in the country prior to the arrival of the Bemba-speaking peoples,(5) had lodges "along the entire length of the Luapula as far as Lake Mweru on both the British and the Belgian sides"(6) in 1914. "Nkuba is the recognised

(1) Quick, 1940, p.221.
(2) Burton, p.128.
(3) Campbell, I, 1914.
(4) Crawford, 2, p.129.
(5) According to Campbell. Another version is that it came "with the migratory tribes of the Kazembe's, the Walunda and the Wasi, from the west about 1760." (Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911, p.260.)
(6) Campbell, op.cit., p.77.

7: Richards E-5 (1930-1934) 1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

more usual to live with kinsmen on the matrilineal side, the grandfather or the mother's brother, yet a man may choose to live with his father's people by preference, and they play an important part at all the great ceremonial occasions in his life. The strength of the bilateral *ulupwa* is in fact one of the distinguishing features of the Bemba kinship system as compared with the strongly patrilineal societies of South Africa to my mind. It affects the political system in two ways. First, it allows for a much greater variety in the composition of the village, and more possibilities of change in its membership; and, secondly, we find in the case of the chief's relatives that the *ulupwa* of a ruler is an important unit in the whole political machine. A ruler's sons receive positions and office as well as his heirs, the maternal nephews; and his father's relatives and those related to him by marriage are also favoured, so that his grip over the country is a strong one.

(2) *Local Grouping*. The local unit in Bemba society is the village (*umushi*, plur. *imishi*). It contains on an average thirty to fifty huts, and is a kinship unit first and foremost. A village comes into being when a middle-aged or elderly man has acquired a big enough following of relatives to justify his applying to the chief for permission to set up a community on his own. He usually builds near other relatives, but land is so plentiful that it is perfectly possible for him to settle almost where he pleases within the chief's domain. The core of the village consists in the first place of the headman's own matrilocal family group, i.e. his married daughters with their husbands and children, and probably members of his matrilineal descent-group, i.e. his sisters and their children. Polygamy is rare. A chief will have a number of wives, say ten to fifteen, but commoners do not often have more than one.

A successful headman will be able to attract more distant relatives to him, both on the patrilineal and matrilineal side. On his death he may be succeeded by his heir, and such a local community may continue in existence with frequent changes in its composition, for two, three, or even more generations. Indeed, the village of the hereditary officials of the paramount chief (*bakabilo*, cf. pp. 100, 108) remain permanently fixed in one village. Thus in every district there are a number of new villages brought into existence by the chief's favour (*ukupokelafye kuli mfumu*) and therefore specially dependent on his support. These include communities newly gathered together by commoner headmen, as

7: Richards E-5 (1930-1934) 1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

621 624 described, as well as existing villagers which have been given, with or without the inhabitants' goodwill, to a relative of the chief. Besides these new headmanships, there are those founded in the chief's predecessors' reigns and described as such, and on the whole less dependent on the present ruler. The proportion of new to old villages in Citimukulu's district in 1933 was as follows:

On 160 villages:

	per cent.
New villages	28
Villages with one previous holder of the headmanship	16
Villages with two previous holders of the headmanship	10
Villages with three or more holders of the headmanship	40
Villages constituted from remnants of two old villages	6

The skill with which he allots headmanships, and the positions in which he places his own relatives, contribute greatly to a chief's power.

621 166 In spite of the provisions for inheritance of headmanships, the Bemba village is an impermanent community from many points of view. It moves every four or five years, in keeping with the practice of shifting cultivation, and is liable to disruption at the death of an important member or at any loss of popularity by the headman. The plentiful supply of land and the many alternative possibilities of kinship grouping provide ample opportunities for a man to change from one village to another if he pleases, and in any case he is almost bound to live in a series of communities during his lifetime, e.g. the village of his birth, that to which he moves when he marries, any other village he may go to when he acquires the right to move his wife and family from her people's care, and lastly, in some cases, a community of which he may acquire the headmanship through succession to his maternal uncle. Hence, although a man's companions and fellow workers are those of his *umushi* and he speaks with some affection of the village of his birth or of his mother's people (*icifulo*), yet the bonds of kinship are much stronger than those of the impermanent local group. A Bemba is a member of a *ulupwa* and may move as he pleases to live with any of the relatives composing it, and he is the subject of a chief and may obtain permission to live in any part of the latter's territory, but his ties to a given locality are not necessarily strong.[1]

[1] cf. my *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia* (1939), chap. vii.

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A chief's village (*umusumba*) is very much larger than that of a commoner. Inhabitants of the capital are composed of relatives of the chief, his followers, and also a number of families which moved there originally to win royal favour and have become accustomed to court life.[1] Since a chief's reputation depends largely on the size of his capital, and his councillors, courtiers, and administrative officers were drawn largely from his villagers, the *umusumba* is an important unit in the political machine. The late Nkula's village had about 400 huts when I visited it in 1931, that of the Citimukulu 150 in 1938. The capitals of pre-European days were evidently very much larger. These communities were divided into sections (*ifitente*, sing. *icitente*) and though nowadays there are nine *ifitente* at the paramount's village, there were formerly thirty to forty, according to native accounts.

The whole Bemba territory is divided into districts (*ifyalo*, sing. *icalo*). The *icalo* is a geographical unit with a fixed boundary and a name dating from historical times, e.g. the district of the Citimukulu is known as Lubemba, the country of the Bemba, and that of Mwamba, Ituna. These districts are territories originally allotted to members of the royal family, but once so divided they have never been sub-divided to provide smaller chieftainships for a new generation of princes as has happened in some parts of South Africa.

But the *icalo* is also a political unit. It is the district ruled over by a chief with a fixed title—the name of the first ruler to be appointed over each particular strip of land, always a close relative of one of the earlier Citimukulus. There are several types of chief, the paramount, who has his own *icalo*, as well as being overlord of the whole Bemba territory; the territorial chiefs, five or more in number, who have under them sub-chiefs who may rule over very small tracts of country or, rather, over a few villages.[2]

Each of these chiefs is known by the same title *mfumu* and each *icalo* is a more or less self-contained unit, a replica of the social structure of the other. Each capital has its own court, however small. Each chief has rights over the labour of his own villages. They work for him only and not for the paramount as happens among

[1] The phrase '*umucino musumba*' ('inhabitant of the capital') is used to indicate a 'chief's man' or a person of specially polished manners and knowledge of affairs.

[2] Mwamba has as a sub-chief, the Munkonge, and the Nkula has Shimwalule, Mwaba, Mukuikile, Nkweto, &c.

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(c) Economic Background. The Bemba are an Agri-cultural people

like most of the Central Bantu group to which they belong. They keep no cattle. Tsetse-fly at present prevents their keeping stock over most of the country, but in any case they seem to have no pastoral traditions, whatever they may have had formerly. Thus they have no means of storing wealth as have the Southern Bantu. Their marriage contracts are fulfilled by service and not by the passage of cattle. In the old days military glory and the extraction of tribute from conquered peoples seems to have been the dominant ambition of the Bemba chiefs, and their wealth consisted in the size of their following and the amount of service they were able to command. This fact profoundly influences their position at the present day (cf. p. 116).

The soil of most of this district is poor and it has not attracted white settlement. The staple crop is finger millet (*eleusine corecana*), while some kafir corn, a little maize, legumes, and pumpkins are also grown. The people practise shifting cultivation of a primitive type, and the plentiful supply of land and the lack of any localized natural resources which might attract the inhabitants to settle in one area rather than another all affect the political system. As has been shown, they decrease the strength of local ties as against political or kinship affiliations, and they account for the fact that the power to distribute land is not an important prerogative of leadership in distinction to conditions in most Southern Bantu tribes.

Hunting and fishing contribute a small share of the food-supply only. Organized marketing does not exist, and under modern conditions no cash crop has been found for this area. This fact, together with the absence of opportunities for local employment, forces the adult male population to look for work outside the tribal area, with resultant effects, as will be seen, on the political system of the tribe.

(*d*) *White Administration.* The type of white administration introduced in this area is described on pp. 112–20.

III. *Bases of Authority*

The positions of leadership in Bemba society consist of the following offices: (*a*) *territorial rulers* (chiefs and headmen); (*b*) *administrative officers and councillors*; (*c*) *priests, guardians of sacred shrines, and magic specialists with economic functions*; (*d*) *army leaders* in the old days. Succession to all these offices is